

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 SEOUL 00458 180956Z

ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 AID-05 EB-07 /085 W

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P R 180909Z JAN 77

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1588

INFO AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA

AMEMBASSY KIGALI

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 0458

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDIP KN KS BY

SUBJ: ROK/BURUNDI RELATIONS AND APPROPRIATE U.S. ROLE

IN RECOMMENDING AID PROJECTS

REF: (A) STATE 313489, (B) BUJUMBURA 0039,

1. ROK MOFA MIDDLE EAST - AFRICAN AFFAIRS BUREAU DIRECTOR
RO YONG CH'AN (LOW YOUNG CHAN) MENTIONED TO EMBOFFS JANUARY
17 THAT ROK EMBASSY-KINSHASA REPORTED THAT IT FORESEES "NO
POSSIBLE CHANGE" IN ROK-BURUNDI RELATIONS. ROK EMBASSY-BRUSSELS
HAS ALSO REPORTED THAT BELGIAN MOFA OFFICIALS ADVISE THAT IT
IS "TOO EARLY" FOR SEOUL TO APPROACH BUJUMBURA BECAUSE
BURUNDI IS LOOKING FOR AGREEMENTS WITH TANZANIA CONCERNING
OVERLAND TRANSPORTATION TO SEAPORTS, AND AN OPENING TO SEOUL
AT THIS TIME WOULD BE NOT HELPFUL IN THIS REGARD.

2. EMBOFFS DID NOT BROACH SUBJECT OF POSSIBLE TACTICAL
ROK AID TO BURUNDI WITH RO AS HE BROUGHT IT UP HIMSELF,
INSTANTLY DISMISSING THE NOTION WITH THE GOOD-NATURED
REMARK: "THE U.S. SHOULD GIVE AID TO THOSE COUNTRIES"
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(IMPLYING THAT ROK WON'T).

3. QUITE APART FROM ABOVE CONVERSATION IT IS CLEAR FROM
NUMEROUS CONVERSATIONS WE HAVE HAD WITH ROKG OFFICIALS
THAT ROKG IS NOT GOING TO USE ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO OPEN
UP POLITICAL OPPORTUNITIES IN AFRICA UNLESS PROSPECTS FOR
SUCCESS ARE REASONABLY BRIGHT. EXAMPLES WE HAVE HAD RECENTLY

OF ROK GENEROSITY (MAURITANIA, SUDAN, BAHRAIN) INDICATE THAT ROK ATTACHED CONSIDERABLE MPORTANCE TO DEMONSTRATIONS OF SINCERITY FROM POTENTIAL AID RECIPIENTS. MAURITANIA WAS HELPFUL IN NAC, SUDAN HAS PERMITTED ROK CONSULAR PRESENCE, BAHRAIN HAS AUTHORIZED ROK EMBASSY IN MANAMA. IN RETURN ROKG HAS AGREED IN PRINCIPLE TO JOINT FISHERIES VENTURE IN MAURITANIA, IS GIVING FAVORABLE CONSIDERATION TO 15 MILLION DOLLAR OAU CONFERENCE HOUSING COMPLEX IN KHARTOUM, AND HAS CONSTRUCTED SHIPYARD IN BAHRAIN. IN THE CASE OF EGYPT, YAR AND NOW BURUNDI, ON THE OTHER HAND, ROKG HAS BEEN RELUCTANT TO RESPOND TO REQUESTS FOR AID, VIEWING THESE GOVERNMENTS AS STILL CLOSELY TIED TO NORTH KOREA AND UNWILLING TO MAKE CLEAR GESTURE OF ENCOURAGEMENT TO ROKG.

4. POINT WE WISH TO MAKE HERE IS THAT ROKS HAVE RATIONAL BASIS IN THEIR OWN VIEW FOR DECIDING ON AFRICAN AID QUESTIONS. THOSE AFRICAN OR MIDDLE EASTERN GOVERNMENTS WHICH ARE WILLING TO MAKE A FRIENDLY OVERTURE TOWARD ROKG, LIKE SUDAN, WILL PROBABLY ELICIT FAVORABLE RESPONSE. WITH OTHERS, ROKG SEEMS WILLING TO BIDE ITS TIME WITH EXPECTATION THAT ROK REPUTATION FOR AIDING ITS FRIENDS WILL WIN WIDER SUPPORT IN LONG RUN. GIVEN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES WE BELIEVE THAT WEHERE WE CAN BE OF REAL ASSISTANCE IN PROVIDING ROKS INFORMATION THEY DO NOT OTHERWISE HAVE ABOUT AFRICAN DEVELOPMENTS WE CAN USEFULLY DO SO. AS A GENERAL RULE HOWEVER, IT DOES NOT SEEM THAT AT THIS STAGE IN ROK DEVELOPMENT WE SHOULD INTERPOSE OR EVEN SUGGEST JUDGEMENTS REGARDING AID UNLESS THEY ARE REQUESTED, OR THERE IS AN OVERRIDING US INTEREST IN DOING SO.
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